

From: Jake Burns
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/14/01 4:23pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement View.

I view the settlement of the US Department of Justice's v. Microsoft to be inadequate. I urge you to reconsider the ramifications of the agreement the Microsoft is so heartily agreeing to.

I believe that all current Microsoft Software should be relicensed under the GNU gpl scheme. All future Microsoft releases should be required to have no extra software bundled with it. For example, an operating system would be sold as an operating system with no extra applications. Internet Explorer would come as a separate product, so would Wordpad, Notepad, and any other applications that are not necessary or inherent in the operation of the system. This means, no bundled e-mail clients or games either. Essentially an operating system sold by Microsoft would be the kernel, memory debug tools for kernel crashes and a Window manager or Shell.

There are two reasons for this, it forces Microsoft to compete in several arenas legitimately. Instead of relying on the fact that they've made it hard for people to go out and use/install other software. It also provides people the ability to show who they truly support as a business. it is fair to Microsoft in that they can charge for the software products that they currently bundle and make even more money (if their "aftermarket" product is truly that marketable or saleable).

These "aftermarket" products should be bundled in packages of no more than two products. In other words, a Word Processor/Spreadsheet package could be made available, or any other combination of two products bundled could be made available.

On another level Microsoft's hardware, software, and services/internet divisions should be split up. As we can see from past this did not hurt AT&T or any of the spinoffs. As a matter of fact, AT&T has had a few major spinoffs since the creation of the baby bells (eg Lucent).

On top of these measures, Microsoft should pay back the rest of the industry that it has helped to stifle by, creating endowments for open source development. Essentially, they should create seed funds for full time open source development teams. The teams would work on software that doesn't compete with Microsoft's kernel products, eg. Linux open source software.

I personally think that this settlement gives Microsoft the ability to make money in three well defined separate arenas. I also believe that it levels out the playing field a little bit. With Microsoft's new .net strategy, they should be more than happy to open up the source code of their prior products. They should realize the profit potential of selling

software as separate packages, rather than bundling with an OS to stifle competition. They should realize they have a well established internet presence that nearly stifles competition on its own.

I hardly think my proposal is harsh. The reason being, is that it still allows Microsoft to make enough money to satisfy any greedy executive.

Of course the lynchpin to it all is 3 oversight groups. One to monitor their sales of bundled software, one to monitor their funding of open source development and making sure that the open source development is adequately used. The third group would monitor internet services/hardware sales (making sure drivers for their products are available to other OS'es, and making sure that their internet services are truly compatible, (the most recent incident of them blocking other browsers to their content is outrageous)).

Bill Gates is a driven man, he should be up to the challenge of making three separate enterprises run well without each other.

Jake Burns